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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters

Joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides a review of the implementation of the 2008 joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. It also contains the joint workplan for 2009.

* E/CN.6/2009/1.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with Commission on the Status of Women resolution 39/5 of 31 March 1995, Commission on Human Rights resolution 1997/43 of 11 April 1997, and Human Rights Council resolution 6/30 of 14 December 2007. A joint workplan is prepared annually by the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The workplan for 2008 is contained in document A/HRC/7/52-E/CN.6/2008/8.

2. Cooperation between OHCHR and the Division for the Advancement of Women continued in 2008 with the goal of achieving equality between women and men and the promotion and protection of women's human rights. The major activities that were carried out jointly are outlined below, as are plans for joint activities for 2009.

II. Review of the implementation of the joint workplan for 2008

3. During the implementation of the current joint workplan, the exchange of information continued between OHCHR, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Division and OHCHR continued to cooperate within the framework of inter-agency mechanisms, especially the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, under the leadership of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. The Division and OHCHR participated in the seventh session of the Inter-Agency Network from 19 to 21 February 2008 in New York, contributing to discussions on all items on the agenda. Both entities participated in several of the task forces of the Inter-Agency Network, including its task force on violence against women, co-convened by the Division and the United Nations Population Fund. OHCHR also contributed to the inventory of activities of the United Nations system on violence against women, compiled twice yearly by the Division as part of the activities of the task force on violence against women.

4. Both entities continued to participate in the Inter-Agency Cooperation Group against Trafficking in Persons, chaired by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as well as in decision-making concerning grants by the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women. The Division and OHCHR also continued collaboration within the context of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, specifically in the cluster on the advancement of women, which is co-convened by the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Economic Commission for Africa. Both entities also participate in a working group chaired by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women on strengthening United Nations work on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

5. The Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and an OHCHR staff member working with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences participated in an expert group meeting in Vienna from 26 to 28 May 2008, co-organized by the Division for

the Advancement of Women and the Office on Drugs and Crime, on good practices in legislation on violence against women.

6. The Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR collaborated to ensure the smooth transfer as of 1 January 2008 of responsibilities for servicing the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to OHCHR, in accordance with the decision of the Secretary-General. A staff member of the Division at the General Service level worked with OHCHR staff to support the Committee at its fortieth session, in Geneva. The Division established a link to the OHCHR website, referring users to that site for information pertaining to the fortieth and subsequent sessions of the Committee.

7. The Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR continued to support the work of human rights treaty bodies and implementation of the major international human rights instruments, including through exchange of information and dissemination of information about the human rights treaty system. The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women addressed the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on 30 June 2008 during the forty-first session, held in New York. The Division provided inputs to documentation prepared by OHCHR for the Committee, and in particular to reports on ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee (CEDAW/C/2008/II/4 and CEDAW/C/2008/III/4).

8. Both the Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR continued to update their databases and websites. The Division continued to provide information on its website about developments in the area of women's human rights, and in particular enhanced its website in relation to violence against women. OHCHR enhanced accessibility to women's rights informa ion by redesigning a more user-friendly website.

9. OHCHR and the Division for the Advancement of Women, respectively, convened a number of meetings, including training seminars and other capacity-building activities, to support implementation of human rights treaties and follow-up to concluding observations and comments at the national level. The Division for the Advancement of Women continued to participate as a member of the Reference Group for the Action 2 global programme on strengthening United Nations support for the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide, convened by OHCHR.

10. The Division for the Advancement of Women continued its interaction with special procedures mandate holders. In particular, the Division maintained contact and exchanged information with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, in the follow-up to the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women and General Assembly resolution 61/143 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women.

11. Collaboration in support of intergovernmental bodies continued. In March 2008, the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women delivered a statement to the Human Rights Council at its seventh session. In February 2008, the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women addressed the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-second session. The

Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences also attended the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

12. Coordination of the preparation of reports to be submitted to intergovernmental bodies continued. OHCHR provided inputs to the reports of the Secretary-General on trafficking in women and girls (A/63/215) and on eliminating rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations (A/63/216 and Corr.1), which were submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session. OHCHR provided inputs to the reports of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (E/CN.6/2008/6), and on ending female genital mutilation (E/CN.6/2008/3), which were submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-second session. OHCHR contributed to the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system, submitted to the Economic and Social Council (see E/2008/53). The Division contributed information on trafficking in women and girls to a report by OHCHR on trafficking in persons, in response to Human Rights Council resolution 8/12.

III. Joint workplan for 2009

A. Promotion of the human rights of women and mainstreaming of gender perspectives in the field of human rights

13. The Division for the Advancement of Women will continue to implement its mandated responsibilities with regard to women's human rights in follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and other relevant mandates. The Division will cooperate with OHCHR and exchange information of relevance in support of the work of human rights treaty bodies and enhanced mainstreaming of gender perspectives in their work.

14. The Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR will continue to support the participation of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women and of the President of the Human Rights Council in each other's sessions and the participation of the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women.

15. The Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR will continue to seek input and provide comments for reports to be submitted to intergovernmental bodies and special procedures, as relevant. The Division will continue to monitor progress with respect to integrating gender perspectives in the work of intergovernmental and expert bodies and exchange information with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences or other mandate holders, as relevant.

16. The Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR will exchange information and cooperate on follow-up to any actions the Commission on the Status of Women will take at its fifty-third session as well as any actions the Human Rights Council will take in 2009, as relevant. The Division and OHCHR will also

exchange information and seek to collaborate in assisting the Human Rights Council to integrate gender perspectives in its work, including during panel discussions and side events, and OHCHR will regularly provide information about the Council's work programme and related documentation.

B. Technical cooperation, advisory services and meetings

17. The Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR will improve early information exchange and coordination on technical cooperation activities, in particular by sharing plans for such activities, and cooperate whenever possible in such activities. Staff from each entity will be invited to contribute to and participate in relevant workshops, as appropriate. OHCHR will also invite the Division to participate in OHCHR Annual Consultations with heads of field presences.

18. The Division for the Advancement of Women will continue to participate as a member of the reference group for the Action 2 global programme on strengthening United Nations support for the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide.

C. Awareness-raising and outreach

19. The Division will continue to provide information on its website about developments in the area of women's human rights, including a link to the WomenWatch portal.

D. Inter-agency cooperation

20. OHCHR and the Division for the Advancement of Women will continue to cooperate within the framework of inter-agency mechanisms, including the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality under the leadership of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women.